

Merger enhances Air Force’s leadership options

By Master Sgt. Rick Burnham
Air Force Print News

On paper, the merging of two major Air Force personnel offices in the Pentagon appears to simply be a matter of combining similar tasks, of streamlining an area in which one unit can do the job of two.

But, Air Force officials said, the combination of the General Officer Matters Office with the Senior Executive Service Matters Office Sep. 1, will result in much more than just a transparent, organizational shift.

The resulting unit will provide the Air Force with an enhanced capability to manage its senior leaders – a better avenue to put the best people in the positions they need to be in.

“The merger of these two offices is a landmark effort,” said Col. Richard Hassan, chief of AFGOMO. “It will better prepare us to realize the vast potential of our Air Force leaders.”

Hassan, who will head the new Senior Leader Management Office after the merger, said the change will give the Air Force a number of advantages over the old system.

“It will not only allow us to better use our leadership team, but will also allow us to develop that team more deliberately,” he said. “This will lay a solid foundation, giving us a bigger pool of talent to meet the challenges of the future.”

Dr. James Roche, secretary of the Air Force, agreed with the colonel, adding that the new structure will provide a number of different benefits for the Air Force of the 21st century.

He noted that the merger was the vision of Gen. Michael Ryan, who retires as Air Force chief of staff Sept. 6.

“This combination will help us realize one of General Ryan’s goals as chief of staff – to build an enduring, unified cadre of aerospace leaders,” the secretary said. “In today’s total Air Force, we simply must identify, develop and motivate talented individuals, military and civilian, to fulfill the missions of our Expeditionary Aerospace Force. By merging our General Officer and Senior Executive Service programs, we will enhance

operating efficiencies and reduce costs, while dramatically boosting ‘cross-cultural’ awareness among officers and senior civilians in the Air Force.

“The development of leaders who understand the requirements of our Total Force — active military, civilian, guard, reserve, and contractor personnel — will serve as yet another tangible hallmark of the tremendous contributions that Mike Ryan has made to his country during his military career.”

Currently, AFGOMO provides “lifecycle” management of Air Force flag officer corps, from the point they are selected for promotion to brigadier general until their retirement.

That includes all assignments, awards, housing and enlisted aid matters – essentially any personnel matter that would involve a general officer, Hassan said.

AFSEMO provides policy guidance and assistance for the management and administration of the SES Corps with the civilian personnel flights around the Air Force handling the day-to-day operations.

Combining the two offices will essentially do two things for the Air Force, Hassan said.

“This will send a strong message to the force that we definitely consider both general officers and SES civilians as part of the senior leadership of the Air Force,” he said. “It also gives us the capability to more effectively use our leaders’ various talents. In the future, we will look at certain challenges – jobs – and we’ll be better positioned to find the most competent, talented individual to handle the task at hand.”

Hassan used a sports analogy to explain the benefits of the new organization.

“A baseball team does not need nine pitchers – it needs shortstops and catchers and right fielders too,” he said. “Instead of having half the team on one side and the other half on the other side, we’re combining the two so that we can better choose the right people for the right jobs. It takes experts at every position to make a great team.”

Survival through knowledge

By Senior Master Sgt. Steve Reed
8th Civil Engineer Squadron

A co-worker said to me last night, “You have a challenge ahead of you for your tour here. As the readiness flight chief, you have to keep the wing prepared to go to war while they’re switching gears for a Unit Compliance Inspection.” Then we went on to talk about whether this is a warfighting wing or a peacetime wing.

Well, there’s no doubt this wing is at the tip of the spear and totally dedicated to a wartime mission. However, I’m sure there’s some organization, some individual that may think just because we are getting ready for a UCI next spring, that we’ve lost our focus. I can’t speak for everybody, but I can speak for readiness.

The 8th Civil Engineer readiness flight is the disaster preparedness program manager for the entire wing. Our mission is to mitigate, respond to and recover from the effects of natural disasters, major accidents and enemy attacks. What are we doing to get the wing ready for the UCI?

-Checklists – making sure all units have checklists to respond to disasters, accidents and attacks. Are the checklists available, current and useable?

-Training – making sure all units have the right people assigned and trained. Is the training readiness flight provides to the base complete, relevant and documented?

-Equipment – do we have the equipment required to respond to whatever contingency we may have to face?

I would challenge anyone to deny the fact that by preparing for a UCI we are not doing a better job preparing for war. This is only a 12-month tour. Turnover of personnel happens at a staggering rate, and continuity is the most challenging thing we face at this base with the disaster preparedness program. For those reasons, it makes even more sense here that we have UCI continuity books, checklists and operating instructions.

Every unit, every function has a service they provide to customers. In the civil engineer squadron it’s obvious to see what that service is. For the operations flight, it’s fixing things. For the explosive ordnance disposal flight it’s blowing things up! But, for the readiness flight our service is providing information. We have to be able to stand up in front of commanders and provide credible, accurate and relevant information that helps people survive and continue the mission. It can’t happen without accurate checklists, updated training records and a strong disaster preparedness information program. Hence, the motto, “survival through knowledge.”

Have we switched gears and lost our focus on our wartime mission because we are preparing for a UCI? For readiness the line in the sand is too thin to know when or where you’ve stepped over and went from peacetime to preparing for wartime operations.

Commander’s Hotline

The commander’s hotline is your direct line of communication between me and the Wolf Pack. It’s one of several means of helping to resolve concerns and to get my response to comments and questions. As a general rule, I ask you to contact the agency involved first, but if you are not satisfied, call the hotline at 782-5284, e-mail the 8th Fighter Wing Public Affairs office or e-mail me directly.



Col. Burt Field
8th Fighter Wing commander

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Chapel.....	782-4300
Civil engineer squadron customer service.....	782-5318
Commissary manager.....	782-4144
Computer help desk.....	782-2666
Fitness center.....	782-4026
Housing office.....	782-4088
Inspector General.....	782-4850
IDEA office.....	782-4020
Law enforcement desk.....	782-4944
Legal assistance.....	782-4283
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